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African Americans and the Future of the U.S. Economy

by
Lou Ferleger and Jay R. Mandle

Lou Ferleger

Jay R. Mandle

For the first time in the country's history, the level of skills and education of the African-American labor force is a critical determinant of the potential for growth of the economy itself. The integration of black labor into the economy now means that the development of one is dependent upon the development of the other. To investigate this relationship we first examine the recent performance of the economy and the consequences of that performance for the black standard of living, and then the role the African-American labor force can play in overcoming the economic deficiencies that have plagued the economy.

In 1973 the median family income in the United States was $32,190. Median family income in 1988, after adjusting for price changes, was $32,191. During this 15-year period, then, this fundamental measure of welfare went nowhere. Income levels in the United States have stagnated since the early 1970s.[1]

At one level the source of this stagnation is not hard to discover. As is indicated in table 1, economic growth during the 1980s was only about 65% of the rate of growth experienced during the 1960s. In the context of a growing population and a tendency for the wealthy to claim a disproportionate share of the national income, this slowing of growth meant that insufficient income was generated in the economy to raise the income of typical families in the United States population. There has, in other words, been a dramatic slowdown in the rate of growth of the United States economy.

Table 1
Average Annual Percentage Increase in Real Gross National Product, 1950/1960 to 1980/90

	1950–60	1960–70	1970–80	1980–90
Growth Rate	4.0	4.1	2.8	2.7

Source: Office of the President. (1990). *Economic Report of the President.* Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. Table C-5.

The reason for this slowdown, however, is a complex one that does not lend itself to single-factor explanations. At its root is the fact that the rate of growth in labor productivity during the 1970s and 1980s was considerably lower than it was during the 1950s and 1960s. The source of this decline has given rise to a lively controversy in the economics profession, but to date no consensus has emerged. Although conventional wisdom has it that declining productivity growth rates are associated with falling rates of investment, this was not the case during the past two decades. In fact, gross investment rates during the 1970s and 1980s decades were actually higher than they had been in the 1960s.[2]

Americans with the least education (less than a high school diploma) experienced the most significant decline in labor force participation between 1970 and 1988.

A more likely explanation for the slowdown in the rate of growth of our economy is that the improvement in the quality of the United States labor force has not kept pace with the requirements associated with modern technology. It is significant, for instance, that only about 20% of the people in the United States have been exposed to at least one year of college education.[3] And, there is now widespread recognition that the level of skills and education received by the remaining 80% of the population is inadequate to allow effective participation in a technologically modern and internationally competitive economy. If this is so, it follows that unless something is done to upgrade the competence of this large fraction of the labor force, the productivity lag that has plagued us will continue or even intensify. On the other hand, if we were to educationally equip a larger fraction of the United States labor force to work effectively with modern technology, it is highly likely that the rate of productivity—and therefore economic growth—would accelerate.

Nowhere is the problem of incomplete education more pronounced than among the African-American population. It is true that in recent years substantial gains in this regard have been achieved. Nonetheless it is striking that, as indicated in table 2, even in 1988 36.6% of the black population had not

Table 2
Years of School Completed by Race, 1970, 1980, 1988

	High School		College	
	Less than Four Years	Four Years	Less than Four Years	Four Years
		Blacks		
1970	68.6	21.2	5.9	4.4
1980	48.8	29.3	13.5	8.4
1988	36.6	37.1	15.0	11.3
		Whites		
1970	45.4	32.2	11.1	11.3
1980	31.2	35.7	16.0	17.1
1988	22.3	39.5	17.2	20.9

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census. (1990). *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1990.* Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. Table 216, p. 133.

graduated from high school. In that year there were nearly three times as many non-high school graduates as there were college graduates among the African-American population.

The significance of the lag in educational attainment among blacks lies in two dimensions. On the one hand, it has an obvious and direct effect on African American economic well-being. Failure to keep pace with the advancing educational requirements of employment renders a population increasingly vulnerable to setbacks in the labor market. This vulnerability may show up in the form of unemployment. But unemployment is not the only measure that would register a decline in the ability to successfully compete in the labor market because of an inadequate education. Labor force participation rates, the percentage of the population that seeks works, also decline as individuals become frustrated with their market prospects. Similarly, individuals with a low level of skills and/or education may remain in the market and find work, but be compelled to accept reduced relative wages. The latter would be the consequence of a decreased demand for poorly educated workers.

While the relatively low level of educational attainment experienced by African Americans hurts that population's economic well-being, it should also be recognized that this lag in education harms the economy generally.

There is evidence that in recent years the relative position of poorly educated African-American workers in the United States has declined in all three of these measures (unemployment rate, the labor force participation rate, and the mean income earned). For instance, table 3 indicates that when we compare the periods 1977–1980 and 1984–1988—two periods of relative prosperity—the unemployment rate for black high school nongraduates increased more than the unemployment rate for African Americans with higher levels of educational attainment. In addition, as is indicated in table 4, Americans with the least education (less than a high school diploma) experienced the most significant decline in labor force participation between 1970 and 1988. What seems to have happened is that among blacks having the least exposure to school, discouragement with job prospects grew so intense that large numbers of individuals actually gave up the search for work. Finally, as is indicated in table 5, the weekly earnings of African Americans with limited education also suffered compared to those who have been more exposed to formal education. Between the years 1969 and 1984, mean yearly earnings declined for African-American men at each level of education, and they declined as well in three out of five educational categories for women. Notably, the experience was the worst for poorly educated men, for whom the declines ranged between 16% and 29%. College educated men and all black women did better than that, though even in these cases reduced yearly incomes sometimes occurred. The mean yearly income for African Americans generally fell during this period, but the decline was most dramatic for men who possessed either a high school education or less.

Table 3
Unemployment Rate among African Americans by Years of Educational Attainment, 1977/80–1984/88

	1-3 High School	4 High School	1-3 College	4 or more College
1977–80	11.2	9.6	8.2	3.7
1984–88	15.7	12.4	8.8	4.4
Percent Change	+40.2	+29.2	+ 7.3	+18.9

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census. (1990). *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1990.* Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. Table 654, p. 397.

Table 4
African-American Labor Force Participation Rate by Level of Educational Attainment, 1970–1988

	1-3 High School	4 High School	1-3 College	4 or more College
1970	67.1	76.8	81.0	87.4
1975	60.9	75.1	79.7	85.1
1980	58.1	79.2	82.0	90.1
1985	57.0	77.2	85.6	89.9
1988	56.2	77.9	85.5	90.6

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census. (1990). *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1990.* Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. Table 627, p. 379.

While the relatively low level of educational attainment experienced by African Americans hurts that population's economic well-being, it should

Table 5
Mean Yearly Earnings of African Americans by Sex and Level of Educational Attainment, 1969–1984

	1969	1979	1984	Percent Change 1969–1984
		Males		
8 or less	$ 11,900	$ 13,017	$ 9,957	−16.3
9–11	12,809	11,988	9,127	−28.7
12	15,950	15,313	12,382	−22.4
13–15	17,067	16,648	14,960	−12.3
16+	26,977	25,187	24,175	− 6.6
		Females		
8 or less	$ 5,440	$ 7,209	$ 6,283	+15.5
9–11	6,694	7,782	6,135	− 8.4
12	9,307	10,401	9,521	+ 2.3
13–15	11,296	11,566	11,094	− 1.8
16+	19,090	17,805	18,592	− 2.6

Source: Jaynes, G. D. (1990, Fall). The Labor Market Status of Black Americans: 1939–1985. *Journal of Economic Perspectives, 4*(4). Tables 1 and 2.

also be recognized that this lag in education harms the economy generally. A June 1990 report issued by the National Center on Education and the Economy reports that "women, minorities and immigrants will make up the vast majority of new entrants to the workforce in the 1990s and jobs requiring higher skills will grow faster than low skill jobs."[4]

In most cases, individuals who have not attained at least a high school diploma cannot be expected to perform well in an increasingly technically sophisticated economy. Yet, as we see in table 6, almost half of all Hispanics and over one-third of all African Americans have not achieved that level of education. To the extent that the productivity of the American economy of the future depends upon the education and training of the minority population it is clear that the nation is in big trouble. Put another way, unless the educational attainment of the minority population in the United States improves, the country's hopes for resuming high rates of growth and an increasing standard of living look increasingly dubious.

Table 6
Percent of Population with Less than Twelve Years of School, 1988

All Races	23.8
White	22.3
Black	36.7
Hispanic	49.0

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census. (1990). *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1990.* Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. Table 218, p. 134.

That this is so represents a major discontinuity in the needs of the United States economy and the role played by the black population in our economy. Throughout most of the history of this country, the African-American population was entrapped in the Southern plantation economy. As such, it was purposefully denied education in order to constrain its options to that of providing low-level labor to the region's cotton plantations.[5] Technological change and productivity growth occurred at a much faster rate in the rest of the country than was the case in the South, a pattern that closely paralleled regional differences in educational attainment. Low levels of black education were functional for the low-productivity Southern economy, but did not impede technological progressivity elsewhere.

Unless the educational attainment of the minority population in the United States improves, the country's hopes for resuming high rates of growth and an increasing standard of living look increasingly dubious.

With the massive black migration of the 1940s and 1950s, the confinement of African-American labor to low-productivity agricultural work came to an end. A halting and uneven process of occupational integration then occurred in which, over time, black labor came to occupy a significant share of occupations to which in the past it had all but been excluded. Tables 7 and 8 reveal the concentration of black workers in low-income occupations at the time of their massive first entry into the northern industrial economy. Of African-American men who were working in 1950, almost one-half were employed in the low-income occupations of service, laborers, and private household work.[6] By contrast, only 13.6% of nonfarm white laborers were employed in such low-income jobs. A similar pattern was true for women. Almost half of all black women who were working in 1950 were employed in private household work, and the next largest concentration was in services. In contrast, again, white working women were much more evenly distributed over the entire range of occupations. Obviously, although the movement to the cities of the North represented occupational advancement, jobs that were available to African Americans were still the least attractive ones generated by the economy. A substantial degree of additional occupational mobility was required if poverty was to be escaped.

Though parity with the white labor force still had not been achieved by 1990, a substantial degree of occupational integration had been achieved by the African-American labor force. The pattern of upward mobility is particularly obvious among black men in the professional category, where the share of the labor force grew from 2.2% in 1950 to 9.0% in 1990. Subtantial increases among black men were

Table 7
Occupational Distribution of Male Labor Force by Race: 1950, 1970, 1990

Occupation	1950		1970		1990	
	Black	*White*	*Black*	*White*	*Black*	*White*
Professional, Technical and Kindred	2.2	7.9	7.8	14.6	9.0	15.4
Managers, Officials and Proprietors	2.0	11.6	4.7	14.3	6.9	14.5
Clerical	3.4	6.8	7.4	7.1	8.4	5.7
Sales	1.5	6.6	1.8	6.1	5.1	11.9
Craftsmen, Foremen and Kindred	7.6	19.3	13.8	20.8	15.5	20.2
Operatives	20.8	20.0	28.3	18.7	21.8	13.3
Service except Private Household	12.5	4.9	12.8	6.0	17.9	8.9
Laborers	23.1	6.6	17.5	6.2	12.7	5.6
Private Household	0.8	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.1	–
Farm Related	24.8	14.9	5.3	5.6	2.6	4.5
Not Stated	1.3	1.2	0.5	0.3	–	–

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census. *1950 Census of the Population*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office; U.S. Department of Labor. (1971). *Handbook of Labor Statistics*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office; Department of Labor. (1990, May). *Employment and Earnings, 37*(5) Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. Table A-23.

Table 8
Occupational Distribution of Female Labor Force by Race: 1950, 1970, 1990

Occupation	1950		1970		1990	
	Black	*White*	*Black*	*White*	*Black*	*White*
Professional, Technical and Kindred	6.2	13.4	10.8	15.0	14.4	19.3
Managers, Officials and Proprietors	0.5	4.8	1.9	4.8	7.3	11.6
Clerical	4.0	29.8	20.8	36.4	27.4	28.5
Sales	1.3	8.9	2.5	7.7	9.0	13.4
Craftsmen, Foremen and Kindred	1.0	1.7	0.8	1.2	2.4	2.0
Operatives	14.6	19.8	17.6	14.1	9.6	6.5
Service except Private Household	17.8	11.4	25.6	15.3	24.1	15.1
Laborers	1.1	0.7	0.7	0.4	1.9	1.5
Private Household	42.0	4.4	17.5	3.4	3.5	1.0
Farm Related	10.8	3.0	0.8	0.7	0.4	1.1
Not Stated	0.7	2.7	1.0	1.0	–	–

Source: See table 7.

also achieved in other white-collar occupations, whereas the low-income occupations that had dominated the 1950 pattern all saw marked declines.

The pattern among African-American women is much the same. Most dramatically the concentration of these workers in private household labor has almost completely dispersed. By 1990 more than one-fifth of all black women workers were either professionals or managers, while the largest concentration of black women workers occurred in the clerical category. Despite these gains, however, black women in 1990, like their male counterparts, tended to be relatively more concentrated in low-income occupations than white women in the labor market.

In conclusion, the unintended consequence of the process of occupational integration was to tie more closely together the interests of the black labor force and the ability of the American economy to grow and, more specifically, to compete in the international economy. In the past, the South's plantation economy required poorly educated and low-income workers. The low level of educational attainment of these mostly African-American workers came at no cost to northern productivity growth. However, now that the black labor force has been substantially integrated into the work force as a whole, the competencies possessed by black workers are of increased importance in determining the pace of the country's technological growth and economic potential. The education of the black population increasingly looms as a critical determinant of the country's economic well-being. The rejuvenation of United States productivity growth may be helped by—indeed, may actually depend upon—a substantial advance in the level of education, and therefore economic well-being, secured by African Americans. In short, for the first time in United States history, what would be good for the African-American

population economically is also what the economy generally requires.

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[6]This and the following complementary estimates were obtained by subtracting the percentage of the labor force in agriculture from 100 and then dividing the share of the labor force in a specific sector by the result.

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Economic Prescriptions for Black Americans

by
Jeremiah P. Cotton

The following is a policy statement issued October 12, 1989, by the "Study Group on Employment, Income, and Occupations" of the Assessment of the Status of African-Americans project conducted by the William Monroe Trotter Institute. The full report of the study group is published in an article entitled "Race and Inequality in the Managerial Age," which appears in Social, Political, and Economic Issues in Black America.[1]

One of the major conclusions of this report on the relative economic status of blacks in the United States is that a substantial and persisting gap exists between the general circumstances of blacks and nonblacks in this country. Some of the more notable economic dimensions of this gap are revealed in the following findings of this report:

- Black male, female, and teenage unemployment rates, approximately twice as high as the unemployment rates of their white counterparts, have been increasing both absolutely and relatively with each business downturn since the mid-1950s.
- The much-heralded income gains of young, educated, employed black males came to a halt in the late 1970s as the shift from high-paying, blue-collar jobs into low-paying, white-collar and service jobs accelerated for all black males during the 1980s.
- After having narrowed in the preceding years, black female income relative to the income of white females declined during the 1980s and, although black female income has continued to increase relative to white male income, there is still a very large white male-black female income differential.
- Black family income as a percentage of white family income has been steadily falling since the mid-1970s, and black family wealth remains a minuscule fraction of white family wealth.
- Black poverty rates, whether for individuals, children, or the elderly, have been stuck at approximately three times the poverty rates for whites for nearly three decades.

These gaps endure at a time when both the U.S. economy and capitalism itself are undergoing sea changes. The economy is transmuting from one with a wide range of well-paid, blue-collar occupations to one with a bimodal occupational structure containing a number of high-paid, managerial and professional jobs in one mode and a host of low-paid, white-collar and service jobs in the other. At the same time, control of the economy appears to be passing out of the hands of the capital-owning corporate class and into those of an information and idea-producing managerial class.

The relatively unchanging gap in the fortunes of blacks and nonblacks in the midst of a changing economic environment poses serious threats to the very survival of the black community. Several of the opening paragraphs of this report are worth repeating at length on these scores:

> The gap . . . is multidimensional, reaching far beyond differences in economic well-being. The gap directly influences prospects for the health and well-being of upcoming generations, the sustenance of the spiritual and moral fiber of a people. The gap persists in the face of a host of changes: dramatic social policy initiatives such as the New Deal and the Great Society, the civil rights movement, periods of war and peace, and periods of prosperity and depression. The annual ritual of inspection of various statistical measures to assess the extent of black "progress" . . . obscures the fundamental tenaciousness and pervasiveness of the gap. For even when such measures suggest changes in the absolute position of native blacks, they do not demonstrate over the long run any changes in the relative position.[2]

Another interrelated and equally dismaying conclusion of this report is that despite the spate of anti-discrimination laws passed since the mid-1960s discrimination is alive and well and vigorously defend-

ing itself against attempts such as affirmative action to reduce its sway and impact. As the report states:

> We are witnessing the historical outcome for the group that was always viewed by other . . . contesting groups as unworthy of entry into the ethnic social compromise over the allocation of occupational turf. Black workers consistently would be relegated to less-skilled jobs or denied jobs altogether. Matters only become worse when the range of available well-paid, blue-collar occupations narrows with structural change in the U.S. economy.[3]

In the light of this continuing, deepening crisis facing black Americans, it does not seem to be enough to engage in the ritual of making entreaties to the policy-making bodies of this country for policies that will positively affect the situation of African-American communities. Such entreaties have already been made over and over again and have resulted in, at best, piecemeal, underfunded, misdirected, and hugely unsuccessful efforts on the part of the policy-making establishment. Indeed, if the view espoused in this report of the emerging managerial class in control both of the economy and the policies affecting it is a correct one, and if, as one of the authors of this report forcefully argues, blacks make up a disproportionate share of that segment of the working population that will soon be considered extraneous by this new ruling class, then not very much in the way of serious attention can be expected to be given by these new rulers to policy recommendations aimed at relieving the increasingly dire plight of black people. Thus, while this report does urge those who are in charge of making social and economic policy in this country to begin meaningful efforts to address the problems of black people, it also appreciates the need for directing many of its policy recommendations to black people themselves.

Past macrosocial and macroeconomic policies meant to benefit the entire working class have brought little substantive relief to the masses of black Americans.

Unlike some who find the recommendation of race-specific policies inappropriate to the times, we find them most appropriate indeed. Past macrosocial and macroeconomic policies meant to benefit the entire working class have brought little substantive relief to the masses of black Americans. For this reason we believe that policies designed specifically for the economic and social development of the black community must be the order of the day. Such policies must contain, among other things:

- Components for the provision of affordable housing in the black community;
- Adequate medical care and medical facilities in the black community;
- Adequate income maintenance and support for black families, black children, and the black elderly;
- Job training and access to decent-paying jobs, particularly for black inner-city youth;
- Strong and unremitting enforcement of antidiscrimination laws and prohibitions both in the labor and capital markets and in the larger social institutions, including schools, churches, civic organizations, and the legal system; and
- Direct access to capital for the construction and reconstruction of the decaying residential and commercial infrastructure of the black community such as broken streets and sidewalks, trash-filled vacant lots, dilapidated and abandoned buildings, and boarded-up storefronts.

Such undertakings will no doubt cost billions of dollars and require massive resensitization and reeducation of the nonblack majority about this society's past and current neglect of the descendants of its former slaves. It may cost even as much as the modestly estimated $150 to $200 billion recently earmarked for the rehabilitation of the savings and loan industry over the next ten years or so. Certainly, though in the same spirit, it will cost more than the half billion to be paid to the former Japanese-American internees of World War II. However, it will not cost as much as the many hundreds of billions of dollars that were redistributed to the owners of capital during the Reagan administration.

The benefits of these expenditures would, of course, be enormous, and would lead to an incalculable social and economic expansion in this society. Just as every segment of the society benefited greatly from the relatively modest attempts made in the 1960s to dismantle the American apartheid system, so now would our society benefit even more by the completion of this task.

To the black community our recommendations come in the following excerpt:

> First, to put it quite bluntly, it must be clearly recognized that although government has both an economic and moral obligation to provide reconstruction resources to the black community, it will not do so unless absolutely forced to. The *actual*, as opposed to *advertised*, role of government in a capitalist, racialist state is to serve as guardian and enforcer of the capitalist and racial hegemony. It is almost exclusively predisposed and responsive to these interests and will take notice of other claims only if they appear to threaten them. Therefore, the maxi-

mum necessary amount of social, political and economic pressure must be put on the government and through it on the rest of society to acknowledge and recompense the black community for past and present underdevelopment caused by the malfunctioning and in many instances malevolence of this system.

As for the forms of this pressure, it must be recognized that decorous representations and en-

"To put it bluntly, it must be clearly recognized that although government has both an economic and moral obligation to provide reconstruction resources to the black community it will not do so unless absolutely forced to."

treaties to government by minor black elected officials working through the "appropriate" channels will not in themselves get the black community very far. Neither should much be expected from the polite agitations and admonitions of the so-called national establishment leadership. There will have to be an insistent and unrelenting outcry from all segments of the black community, and it may well be necessary to mount mass demonstrations on the order of those of the 1960s as part of this strategy. One former civil rights activist said "We struggled in the 50s to integrate the schools and the buses. We struggled in the 60s to integrate the lunch counters and ballot boxes. And we've got to struggle in the 80s to integrate the money." And he could have added that the struggle associated with the latter may be even more intense and require even more vigorous action than the former struggles did. Jesse Jackson's "street heat" will have to be translated into concrete social, political and economic actions. A society that can come to grips with its treatment of its Japanese-American citizens during World War II and compensate them for the injustices done can also be made to face up to the still unpaid claims of its African-American citizens. It must not be supposed that this acknowledgement by the government of its debt to the erstwhile Japanese-American internees was brought on by some sudden fit of compunction. Not a bit of it. Rather, it had everything to do with the very considerable economic power wielded in world and U.S. markets by Japan. It was not an act of contrition but one of economic self-interest. The government must also be made to recognize that it is in the country's self-interest to address the unfinished business of the long-standing injustices to the black community as well.

One form of economic pressure might require a return to the early boycotts, such as that of the Montgomery, Alabama, bus company, that helped kick off the civil rights movement. The black community had roughly $220 billion in income at its disposal in 1987; and of course most of it was spent with white-owned and operated corporations and industries. Many of these businesses depend quite heavily on the black billions for their survival. The businesses that benefit from black expenditures must be made to join the chorus of black demands—it is, after all, in their economic interests as well.[4]

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The School Choice Issue

Remarks Made at the U.S. Department of Education's Regional Strategy Meeting on Choice in Education

by
Phyllis McClure, Director
Division of Policy and Information
NAACP Legal Defense and
Education Fund, Inc.
October 17, 1989

The term choice as it is used by the current administration with regard to education is a cosmetic, simplistic response to the failure of American schools. Choice has become a catch-all term for a whole variety of programs, plans, and theories. We should not let this meeting or the Department of Education delude us into believing that parental choice holds the promise for poor and minority children. The term is being used to describe not only what is happening in District 4 [public school district in New York City], but a plethora of ideas based on the free market. I say: Buyer beware.

Choice places the burden of making schools work on parents and teachers and lets school boards, legislators, governors, and the federal government off the hook. The federal role in education is to guarantee equal educational opportunity. It is irresponsible for the Secretary of Education [Lauro Cavazos] to promote the notion that simply giving parents choice will lead to better schools. The Secretary does not say that he supports only those choice plans or theories that equalize educational opportunity. He showcases anything called choice.

Mr. Secretary, you have not answered your critics. Last night you alluded to the detractors who fear that choice will lead to increased racial segregation. Then you went on to talk about inner-city students going to the suburbs, and if the city school is not managed right it should be closed down. How many states are currently permitting city children—mostly poor and minority—to attend schools in the white suburbs? The few cases where this is happening have come about under court desegregation orders.

We just heard Governor Keane's remarks; he is a great advocate of choice. But let me tell you two things that the Governor did not tell you about New Jersey. New Jersey's choice plan is limited within a district. Students cannot go across district lines. The second thing the Governor did not tell you is that New Jersey is one of the most segregated states in the nation for blacks and Hispanics, and his administration has been fighting *Abbott v. Burke*[1] tooth and nail. *Abbott v. Burke* is the long-running law suit challenging spending disparities in education in New Jersey.

If you, Mr. Secretary, really believe that choice will promote racial and economic integration, you should publicly support only those plans that are designed to accomplish that goal.

There is an employee of Secretary Cavazos's department, Jack Klenk, who is quoted in *Education Daily*[2] as saying, "The public school choice movement actually emerged from the civil rights movement of the 1960s. Busing was not successful." I have to set the historical record straight.

Freedom of choice in the 1960s was a device used to deny black children their constitutional rights and to deny them the promise of *Brown v. the Board of Education.*[3] Instead of putting the third grade from the black schools together with the third grade from the white school, pairing or clustering school in de jure segregated districts, black children had to choose to go to the white school. A few brave ones did. The NAACP Legal Defense Fund fought freedom of choice in the courts until the Supreme Court finally declared it unconstitutional unless it actually accomplished desegregation.[4]

Choice places the burden of making schools work on parents and teachers and lets school boards, legislators, governors, and the federal government off the hook.

The President and the Secretary are engaged in a public relations exercise to distract our attention from the real issues:

- This administration does not want to spend money to bail out failing schools.
- This administration does not want to talk about the large disparities in state and local spending for education. In one of the pamphlets handed out at this conference, Secretary Cavazos is quoted as saying that more money is not the answer, that we already spend more on education than any other industrialized nation. In your home state of Texas, Mr. Secretary, the

Supreme Court has just declared the funding disparities unconstitutional. The range in spending per pupil went from the low of $2,112 to the high of $19,333. Secretary Cavazos, I would like you to go to that district that spends $2,112 per child and tell them that they do not need more money.

- This administration's promotion of choice does not address the huge number of dropouts from our education system.
- The promotion of choice does not address the lack of an adequate supply of well-trained, well-paid teachers.
- The promotion of choice does not address the declining minority participation in higher education.

Freedom of choice in the 1960s was a device used to deny black children their constitutional rights and to deny them the promise of Brown v. the Board of Education.

- The promotion of choice does not address the watered-down curriculum and low expectations for poor and minority students.
- The promotion of choice does not address the problem of schools that are not preparing youngsters for college or for the high-skilled jobs that this country needs to sustain economic growth.

Parental choice cannot be separated from school improvement and equitable allocation of resources. Here in East Harlem, districtwide educational improvement was well underway before choice was introduced. It was not choice that created specialized, smaller schools; it was teachers. It was not choice that improved test scores; it was the new reading and math programs that were introduced.

Advocates of choice would have us believe that giving parents options will create good schools and drive bad schools out of existence. That, to put it bluntly, is nonsense. Truly free choice will lead to even greater inequities in funding, in the distribution of opportunities, and in the assignment of teachers, as well as greater race and class segregation. Middle- and upper-class parents who can negotiate the choice process and who can afford the transportation will take state aid with them, further draining resources from property-poor communities. The teachers no other school will take will be left with the students no other school wants. The existing hierarchy among American schools will be further exacerbated.

Choice does nothing for bad schools. It simply ignores them. The theory is that these schools will disappear because either the school will be closed or all the parents will transfer out. But transfer to where? Good schools are scarce. Seats in them are limited. Superior schools will establish admission requirements for fear that their reputation and test scores will decline if they accept all comers. Where are the students remaining in the bad schools supposed to go?

The only real answer is to create excellent schools for all children. And that includes excellent schools for children whose parents do not make a choice, children who move into a district after the choice period, and children whose choices are rejected.

My final comment about choice is: Buyer beware.

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Black Underrepresentation in Science and Technology

by
Robert C. Johnson

The United States is experiencing a crisis in the training of scientific and technical personnel. A recent report from the National Science Foundation (NSF) indicates that the number of U.S. citizens earning science and engineering doctorates has decreased nearly 5% since 1980.[1] The National Research Council's study of the adequacy of research support for the mathematical sciences in the United States reveals that not only has the production of Ph.D.s in mathematics declined since 1969–70, but the percentage of U.S. citizens receiving those degrees fell during the last decade from 78% of all mathematics Ph.D.s to only 61% of all mathematics Ph.D.s.[2] Heller reports that there has been a 15% decline between 1977 and 1984 in the number of Americans studying for graduate degrees in mathematics.[3]

Despite these shortages, people of color and white women remain severely underrepresented in scientific and technical professions; this has been the case historically and continues to be true today. In recent years the relative underrepresentation of minority group members and women in the various sectors of American life has received national attention and, to some extent, national action. While a number of initiatives have been undertaken to address this problem, it still remains a serious one, particularly for blacks, Hispanics, and American Indians. Students from these groups continue to underachieve in mathematics, science, and technical subjects.[4] Furthermore, youths from these groups are less likely to take higher level high school mathematics and science courses or to major in mathematics, science, and technical fields in college.[5] The net effect of these circumstances is that members of these groups are underrepresented at the professional levels and their communities are underserved or ill-served by these fields. Perhaps what is most distressing is that these trends suggest that this situation will continue for some time into the future.

Extent of Black Underrepresentation

The selectivity index in table 1 was computed to measure the extent to which a group's representation

Table 1
Index of Underrepresentation in Science and Engineering (S/E) Professions by Race

Group	(A) Percent of 1990 U.S. Population	(B) Percent of 1988 S/E Work Force	(C) Percent of 1987 Employed S/E Doctorates	Selectivity Indexes A/B	A/C
American Indians	0.8	0.8	0.1	0.95	6.71
Asians	3	5	8.7	0.60	0.34
Blacks	12	2.6	1.5	4.62	8.00
Hispanics	9	1.8	1.7	5.00	5.29
Whites*	75.2	89.8	88	0.84	0.85

Sources: 1990 population data reported by Felicity Barringer, "Census Shows Profound Change in Racial Makeup of the Nation," New York Times, Monday, 3/11/91, A1. Science and engineering work force data reported in NSF, Women and Minorities in Science and Engineering, 1990.

*White females had selectivity indexes of 3.0 and 3.58, using 1980 census data and 1986 occupational data.

in the science and engineering (S/E) work force and among employed doctoral scientists and engineers differs from their relative presence in the larger U.S. population. The larger the magnitude of the selectivity index, the greater the disparity between the proportional representation in the population and in the S/E work force and among employed S/E doctorate holders. A value of one means that there is no difference in the relative representation of a group in the general population and in the S/E work force. A value less than one indicates that a group is overrepresented in the S/E work force relative to its proportional presence in the U.S. population.[6]

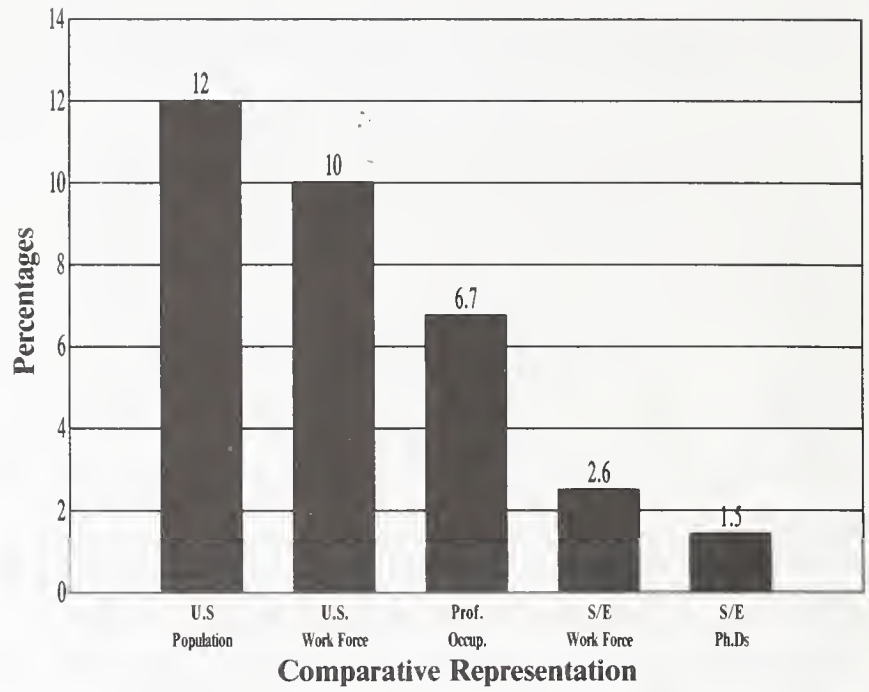
Table 1 shows the underrepresentation in the S/E work force by race. These data reveal that blacks are underrepresented by a magnitude of approximately five in the S/E work force and by a magnitude of eight among employed S/E doctorate holders. Another way of stating this situation is that black representation in the S/E work force is roughly one-fifth of the black presence in the U.S. population. The share of employed S/E doctorates held by blacks is only one-eighth of their proportional size in the larger society. In contrast, white males are twice as likely to be represented in the S/E work force and among employed S/E doctorate holders as they are in the U.S. population.

With the exception of people of Asian origin, all groups trail white males in their relative presence in the S/E work force and among employed S/E doctorate holders. Persons of Asian descent are almost two times as likely to be in the S/E work force relative to their population proportion, and almost three times overrepresented among employed S/E doctorate holders.

People of color and white women remain severely underrepresented in scientific and technical professions; this has been the case historically and continues to be true today.

Relative to black participation in the U.S. labor force and in other professional and related occupations, black representation in science and technical fields is still low. This is depicted in graph 1. This graph shows the relative representation of blacks in: the U.S. population, the U.S. work force, the professional occupations in the United States, the science and engineering work force in the United States, and the pool of science and engineering doctorate holders in the United States. While American Indians, Hispanics, and white females are also underrepresented, the magnitude of underrepresentation is generally greatest for black Americans (see table 1).

Graph 1
Black Representation in Science Fields



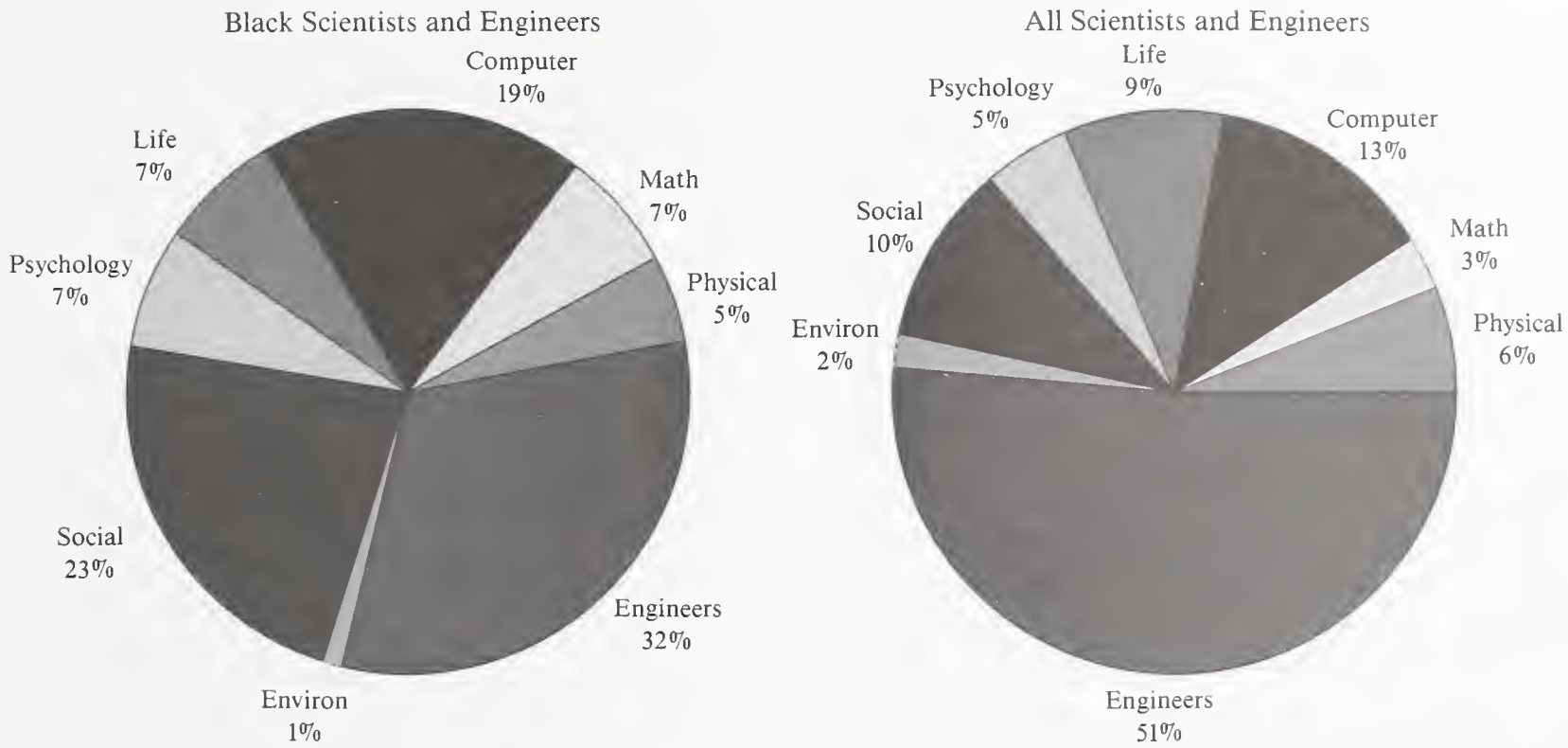
Source: National Science Foundation. (1990). *Women and Minorities in Science and Engineering.* Washington, DC: Author.

In addition to the severe underrepresentation of blacks in S/E fields, their representation varies greatly in the different science and engineering fields.[7] For example, blacks are more likely to be mathematicians, social scientists, and psychologists than are S/E professionals in general, and less likely to be environmental scientists (see graph 2). The percentage of blacks who are engineers is less than that for the total pool of scientists and engineers, 32% compared to 51%.

Black Achievement in Mathematics and Science

A number of quantitative measures are available to indicate that the achievement of black students in mathematics and science is continuing to lag behind that of other groups. To increase the black presence in the S/E fields, higher levels of black achievement in these areas are required. In considering the issue of the achievement of blacks in mathematics and science, data on course-taking patterns, test performance, and enrollment patterns in science and mathematics are consulted to determine the current level of black underachievement. Given the biased nature of standardized tests, they are useful if considered only as indicators of past experience and partial measures of achievement and not as measures of aptitude or ability. They can be used to suggest the disparities that exist between black students and those from the larger population in the areas of mathematics and science. Along with other types of data, they indicate the failings of the social and educational systems in providing opportunities and resources to many black, Hispanic, and American Indian children.

Graph 2
Employed Scientists and Engineers by Field and Race



Source: National Science Foundation. (1990). *Women and Minorities in Science and Engineering.* Washington, DC: Author, Appendix Table 1

Data from the 1986 National Assessment of Educational Progress report indicate that the gap between black and white students in science and mathematics achievement is closing, due in part to improved performance by black students. However, these results also indicate that black students fare less well on measures of mathematics and science knowledge than do their white counterparts at all age levels (9, 13, and 17 years).[8] Similar results are reported for performance on the mathematics section of the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) for the period between 1976 and 1988,[9] and the quantitative portion of the Graduate Record Examination for 1979 and 1987.[10]

Closely related to performance on standardized tests is the number and type of courses taken in mathematics and science. Black students, as well as American Indian students, as a rule, take fewer advanced level courses in these areas than do Asian and white students, even though blacks, like Asians, take more years of mathematics courses than do their white, Hispanic, and American Indian counterparts. Black students received lower grades in mathematics than students from other ethnic backgrounds (grade point average: 1.98, blacks; 2.60, Asians; 2.34, whites; and 2.19, American Indians).[11]

Several reports indicate that black and low-income students are less likely to have access to computers, either in their schools or homes, and are likely to have different types of learning experiences with computers than their white and/or more affluent colleagues. Fullilove, analyzing data from studies conducted by the National Center for Educational Statistics and the Center for Social Organization of Schools at Johns Hopkins University, reports that a smaller percentage of urban schools (33%) have computers than do suburban (37%) and rural schools (37%).[12] However, those urban schools with computers had, on the average, more computers than the other types of schools (6.8 per urban school; 3.9, suburban; 3.0, rural).

Data from the Hopkins study indicate that "computers were far less accessible in predominantly minority elementary schools than in predominantly white schools, irrespective of the socioeconomic status of its students."[13] Computers in urban schools are also more likely to be used for remediation and drill-and-practice, and less likely to be used for instruction in programming/computer science. This finding caused Fullilove to observe that computer resources at white schools, particularly working class schools, were being used more frequently to create skilled computer users than was the case in minority schools.

In terms of home computing, Anderson reports substantial differences in access related to family income.[14] A national study in 1983 found that 30% of those families with incomes above $50,000 had home computers compared to 4% of those with incomes under $15,000. Research conducted in Minnesota in 1985 reveals that families with low incomes are not only less likely to own computer equipment, but if they own one, it is more likely to be less expensive and game-oriented, with fewer peripherals and software. Also, low-income owners of computers spend less time using their computers, on the average, than their higher-income counterparts (12 hours weekly versus 18 hours).[15]

Black Community Development and Science and Technology

The importance of black underrepresentation in scientific and technical fields is not limited solely to the crisis in developing human resources for national needs (i.e., defense, industry, research, etc.); the underrepresentation bears directly upon issues facing the black community. Community development requires civil engineers, architects, urban planners, doctors, environmental scientists, and many other professionals with technical skills as well as an understanding of, an appreciation for, and a sensitivity to the needs, aspirations, and culture of the members of that community. Technical approaches to human problems require social perspectives and sensitivity. These professionals will have to represent the views of the community and not those of outside parties whose interests may not be in harmony with the community's goals.

Black representation in the scientific and engineering work force is roughly one-fifth of the black presence in the U.S. population.

A distrust of and hostility toward science and technology on the part of many blacks may be one factor contributing to the lack of representation and achievement by black Americans in these areas. Historically, blacks have been victimized by technological innovations. New technological developments also pose threats and challenges to the black community.[16] In a related vein, blacks have historically used educational, social, political, economic, and judicial means to seek relief from their oppression. As a consequence, many talented blacks have sought careers in areas where they can be of service to their people (law, education, social work, medicine, etc.). Since science and technology have not been viewed traditionally as means of obtaining social justice, they are not careers that large numbers of blacks have considered. The application of scientific and technical remedies is a relatively recent advent in the fight against racism and its effects.

Johnson has conducted several studies in which he has asked black respondents to identify their reason for selecting a professional occupation or college major.[17] A significant number of those in nonquantitative fields gave reasons that reflected a people or community focus, a "helping orientation." One implication of this finding is the need to show the relevance of science and technology to the interests and aspirations of black Americans.

Policy and Program Implications

A long-term solution to the problem of black underrepresentation in scientific and technical fields requires a comprehensive effort involving schools, community groups and agencies, families, businesses, universities, and governmental units. Projects designed to address this issue should consider working with elementary and junior high school teachers, administrators, students and their parents, community groups, and mathematics and science educators. Private and public funding sources need to recognize the complex nature of the problem and the multidimensional approach required to address it.

A comprehensive approach would include increased scholarship aid for black students (as well as other underrepresented groups); support for presecondary school programs; increased emphasis on the contributions and achievements of blacks and other underrepresented groups in the fields of science and technology; support for out-of-school programs; the development of centers that provide computing and science opportunities for interested parties (both younger and older people); and more intensive recruiting efforts to attract black youth to mathematics and science courses, majors, and careers. Holman has put forth proposals incorporating these elements and identified programs currently operating under this model.[18]

The responsibility for producing scientific talent lies with the schools. However, a number of studies and reports indicate that our schools are falling short of fulfilling this responsibility. The National Commission on Excellence in Education stated in *A Nation at Risk*[19] that the nation's security is imperiled by poor educational quality. The National Science Board recognizes the importance of and urges improving mathematics, science, and technology education in elementary and secondary schools.[20] Among its recommendations is the call for retraining teachers.

Computers in urban schools are . . . more likely to be used for remediation and drill-and-practice, and less likely to be used for instruction in programming/computer science.

Calls abound for educational reform from the mathematics and science education communities. For example, the National Science Teachers Association in a report on science education for the 1980s called for more resources to be devoted to science education to combat the deterioration of mathematics and science instruction in the schools.[21] Beyond the calls from science and technological communities, most of the reports on educational reform have indicated a need for more quantitative, scientific and technological instruction for the youth of America.

Teachers are very important in the production of scientific personnel. For students of color, role models are considered important in encouraging participation in scientific fields. However, the proportion of teachers who are minorities is declining.[22] Thus, it is very likely that, unless significant actions are taken, many, if not most, minority students will be taught by whites. This situation raises the question: To what extent are these teachers prepared to teach mathematics and science in a multiethnic environment to culturally different students? It is clear that most teachers are lacking on both dimensions—the technical and the cultural.

A distrust of and hostility toward science and technology on the part of many blacks may be one factor contributing to the lack of representation and achievement by black Americans in these areas.

Consequently, teachers are generally not viewed as partners in the production of black scientific personnel. Research by Johnson on factors related to black participation in mathematics and science shows that teachers and other school personnel generally are not influential persons.[23] For example, persons without a quantitative background tend to identify themselves or their parents as the most influential persons in the selection of mathematics courses, college majors, and occupations. Johnson also found this to be the case among college students majoring in science and technical fields. On the other hand, some black professionals in scientific and technical professions indicated that school personnel did play a role in their election of high school mathematics courses.[24]

A key aspect to addressing this problem must be sensitizing elementary and junior high school personnel, as well as those who create school policy and curriculum, to the problem of underrepresentation of blacks and other minorities in mathematics and science and its ramifications. This qualitative factor is very important in minority student achievement according to sociological and educational research.[25]

In order to reverse the current situation of minority underrepresentation, it is important that teachers play a greater role in teaching and orienting students toward quantitative areas. While teachers are not deemed very influential at this point in time, they can be an important source of influence in black youths' enrollment in such critical courses as mathematics and science.

Not only are the teachers of minority students not preparing them for a technological future, but the schools that these students attend are not equipped with the computer equipment and expertise to prepare them in computer literacy.[26] Greater access to technological training is a must for large numbers of black students, as well as more creative use of existing technological resources in the schools. Giving the teachers of underserved students better training in the use of modern technology as an instructional tool will enhance the utilization of available technological resources in their schools and increase the level of teacher expertise.

Another key aspect of addressing this problem involves parents. Since there is research indicating that parents are identified by students and professionals as the most influential people in their career choice, a related goal would be to give parents information about scientific and technical professions so as to enable them to better advise their children about course selection and other pertinent matters. Similarly, programs such as the Family Math Project at Berkeley, which aims to help parents become mathematics educators at home, should be expanded and extended to more black families.

The final key aspect of addressing this problem involves the community. Community resources, both public and private, will have to be identified and utilized to implement comprehensive and ongoing programs of the type suggested above to address the problem of minority underrepresentation in quantitative fields at an early and basic level and to effect both immediate and long-term redress to this problem. Use of community resources to complement school facilities will give black youths additional opportunities to be exposed to technical materials and expertise. Programs and equipment housed in churches, civic centers, schools, businesses, and other community-based institutions can provide increased access to underserved populations. Support for such programs can come from community organizations and governmental sources.

Not only are the teachers of minority students not preparing them for a technological future, but the schools that these students attend are not equipped with the computer equipment and expertise to prepare them in computer literacy.

Additional research is needed in the area of black underrepresentation to identify the early determinants and correlates of this problem. Ethnographic and quantitative research on family, community, and early school experiences is called for. In addition, there is a need to assess the programs that have been initiated over the past ten to fifteen years to address this problem in order to identify the factors that make for successful and effective responses. Finally, it would be helpful to catalogue the different intervention programs according to pur-

pose, design, content, target group, demographic composition, effects, and results.

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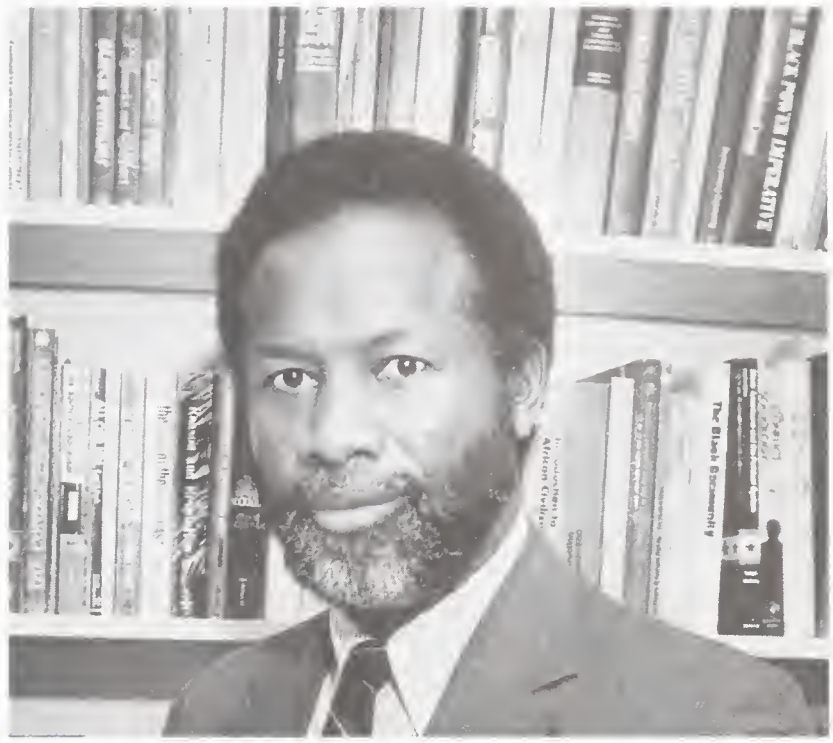
Blacks in Golf

by
Wornie L. Reed



From 1961 until the mid-1980s a weekend ritual was repeated by many African Americans who follow golf. For these individuals, each weekend morning included a peek at the standings of the weekly Professional Golf Association (PGA) tournament printed in the newspaper to see how the black golfers were doing and whether any one of them was the tournament leader or was close enough to the lead to win the tournament. As the 1980s came to an end anyone still practicing the old ritual was doing so in vain. No blacks were winning tournaments on the regular PGA Tour, nor were they even challenging the tournament leaders because the regular professional tour included fewer African-American golfers than it had in the 1960s.

In 1961, when the PGA Tour finally relented and removed its "caucasians only" clause to permit blacks to become members and to play in the tournaments, the great Charlie Sifford started playing on the tour. At 39 years of age he was clearly past his prime—although that is hard to imagine considering his current success as a Super Senior on the Senior PGA Tour. Sifford suffered a number of racial insults and indignities in his early years on the tour. In some instances these indignities were reminiscent of those that Jackie Robinson had endured some 15 years earlier in integrating major league baseball; and in other instances they were worse, as hostile spectators would occasionally kick or step on his ball when it would land near them. This, of course, made it more difficult to play the ball, because a golfer must play the ball "as it lies," and this treatment cost Sifford strokes, which cost him prize money.

Why is it that as more African Americans are becoming involved in other aspects of American life, the opposite trend is happening in golf—at least on the PGA Tour?

By the mid-1960s more blacks were joining the PGA Tour, and by the end of the 1960s there were usually about eight or ten black players at each tour stop—players such as Sifford, Rafe Botts, Pete Brown, Jim Dent, Lee Elder, George Johnson, Charlie Owens, Curtis Sifford, Nate Starks, and Chuck Thorpe. In the 1970s as many as a dozen blacks played the tour. Of course, casual followers of golf may not have known that there were as many blacks on the tour because they seldom saw them on television. The individual players shown on television are always the tournament leaders and the top few contenders; and although black golfers frequently won prize money, few of them actually won tournaments. Today there are only two blacks who are members of the regular PGA Tour—Calvin Peete and Jim Thorpe, Chuck Thorpe's brother—and each of them is nearing the end of their most competitive years, as they are 47 and 42 years of age, respectively.

What's happening here? Why is it that as more African Americans are becoming involved in other aspects of American life, the opposite trend is happening in golf—at least on the PGA Tour? Before examining this specific issue, let's look at the long history of African Americans in golf.

The Early Years of Golf

Golf became the centerpiece of the country club movement during the 1800s in America.[1] This association with country clubs gave the sport an aura of exclusivity that still persists despite the great numbers of middle- and working-class people who play on public courses. Consequently, the participation of blacks in golf, as well as the participation of others outside the country club set, was limited in the early years of the sport, i.e., during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Nevertheless, blacks did play golf in those early years. In fact, a black person invented the golf tee, a very important event in the development of the game of golf.

Dr. George F. Grant, a prominent black dentist in Boston, patented the first golf tee in 1899. The golf tee is the small piece of wood with a slightly concave top on which the golf ball is placed for the first shot

on each hole. Before this invention, players constructed dirt tees by fashioning small mounds of dirt with their hands in the teeing area for each hole. Boxes of dirt would be placed at each hole to facilitate this procedure. Dr. Grant patented his tee, but he made no attempt to capitalize on his invention's popularity; rather, he gave the tees away to friends and fellow golfers.[2]

Another notable instance of African-American involvement in the sport's early years was their role as golf professionals. In 1895 John Shippen, the son of a native American mother and an African-American father, played and finished fourth in the second U.S. Open, the oldest major tournament in the United States and golf's most prestigious tournament.[3] He and his brother, Cyprus, were teaching professionals at some of the most elite clubs in the country. John Shippen competed in professional tournaments for several years, but eventually—due to the strengthening of Jim Crow laws throughout the United States—he and other blacks were excluded from the tournaments.

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At the turn of the century, most blacks did not have access to private clubs, so they played at public courses—usually with restricted access. In 1926 a group of golf-playing black physicians from Washington, D.C., met in Stowe, Massachusetts, and organized the United Golf Association (UGA). (Blacks were banned from public courses in Washington.) Member clubs were organized, and national and local tournaments have been sponsored continuously since then. Originally, there were 26 member clubs, but black participation in golf steadily grew and in the 1930s there were some 50,000 black golfers.[4] By the 1960s the UGA had nearly 90 member clubs and about 90,000 members.[5]

Blacks also found opportunities to play golf in the army and in colleges. Although most black college players were at historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs), some played and excelled at white Division I schools. For example, A. D. V. Crosby, a regular at UGA tournaments, won the all-campus golf event at the University of Michigan in 1930, and another black finished second. During the same period, George Roddy, an engineering student at the University of Iowa, was the number one player on that school's golf team. Later, in the 1950s, Forrest Jones, Jr., was the number one player on the Indiana University golf team, which pitted him in Big Ten matches against the number one players on opposing teams, including fellow collegians Jack Nicklaus and Tom Weiskopf.[6] And in 1959, Billy Wright won the National Public Links championship, the top tournament for public course players, while he was a student at Western Washington College.[7]

Tuskegee Institute was the first HBCU with a golf course. They opened a three-hole course in the 1920s and expanded it into a nine-hole course in the 1930s. In 1938 Tuskegee sponsored the first black intercollegiate tournament with the following schools participating: Tuskegee, Alabama State, Florida A & M, Morehouse, and Morris Brown.[8]

Suing for Access

In the 1940s blacks began to sue to participate in golf. Black professionals sued to play in PGA tournaments and black amateurs and professionals sued to play on the public courses across the nation. The suits to open public courses to blacks generally took place in the segregated sourthern states. The first successful suit probably occurred in Baltimore in 1948 when a federal judge ruled that the local course for blacks was not of equal standard to the three public courses that were reserved exclusively for whites and ordered the "white" courses opened to blacks.[9]

The number of black golfers grew so rapidly after World War II that the segregated public courses could not accommodate the demand. Consequently, during the 1950s lawsuits were filed in a number of cities across the country. Although many of these suits were initiated before the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision, that decision offered an added incentive to blacks who sought to use these municipal golf courses—public facilities subsidized with public tax monies, including black tax dollars. Several of the suits were successful, with success sometimes meaning the opening of public courses to everyone and at other times meaning the construction of new eighteen-hole courses for blacks.

The PGA Tour

Black professional golfers began suing the PGA in 1943. Several top players, including Bill Spiller and Ted Rhodes, sued for entry into the Richmond Open, a tour event in California that followed the Los Angeles Open by a week. Because that tournament was run not by the PGA, but by local organizations, these men had played in the Los Angeles Open alongside the major white stars. And, by finishing eleventh and twenty-fifth respectively, Spiller and Rhodes had qualified for the PGA event, the Richmond Open. In fact, Bill Spiller, who was heavyweight boxing champion Joe Louis's personal instructor, had tied the great Ben Hogan with a 68 in the first of four rounds in the tournament.[10] Despite their success in qualifying for the PGA event, these men were denied entry. They sued, and in an out-of-

court settlement the PGA agreed to drop its "caucasians only" policy. However, the PGA reneged on this agreement and did not actually drop this policy until 1961. In the fall of 1959 Charlie Sifford was granted a PGA card as an "approved player," a classification usually reserved for foreigners.[11] He did not receive his Class A card until 1964.

Charlie Sifford was the "Jackie Robinson of golf." He was the most famous black golfer between World War II and 1970. Between 1952 and 1960 Sifford won the UGA National Professional title six times. In 1957 he won the Long Beach (California) Open to become the first black player to win a significant title in a predominantly white event.

Sifford's career was similar to that of his fellow black professionals. He started caddying at age nine; at age 13 he won a caddy tournament by shooting a 70. He later moved from Charlotte, North Carolina, to Philadelphia and became a teaching professional (for black entertainer Billy Eckstine, among others[12]) and chauffeur. Since golf was his love he played in the UGA and other local professional events, though neither were very lucrative ventures. He had to pursue chauffeuring and other odd jobs to make a living.

Pete Brown, from Jackson, Mississippi, joined the PGA Tour in the mid-1960s and became the first black player to win a PGA satellite event, the 1963 Waco Open in Oklahoma.[13] In 1968 he won the San Diego Open, a regular PGA Tour event. Like Sifford, he also came up from the UGA and was a former caddy. He won the UGA professional title in 1961 and 1962, but chronic back problems hampered his playing and limited his career.

Lee Elder was the second black golfer to have a major impact on the PGA Tour. Elder, also a former caddy and a protege of Ted Rhodes, received his PGA card in 1967 as a 33-year-old rookie, after dominating the UGA Tour of professional tournaments and winning four UGA national professional titles between 1963 and 1967. Elder made a big splash on the PGA Tour in 1968, his first year, in a memorable five-hole "sudden death" playoff with Jack Nicklaus, which he lost. Elder went on to do very well on the tour and to eventually win four PGA Tour events in the 1970s.

By winning the PGA Monsanta Open in 1974, Elder qualified for and played in the 1975 Masters. However, his participation in the Masters was a result of a change in the rules rather than his accomplishment as an individual. The Masters tournament at Augusta National Golf Course in Augusta, Georgia, obtained its prestigious status by promotion and by being an invitation-only tournament. This tournament is not run by any of golf's organized associations; it is run by the Augusta National Golf Club. From the beginning of the tournament in the 1930s all PGA tournament winners from the previous year were invited to play along with all previous winners of the Masters tournament. In addition, a previous Masters winner could invite an otherwise ineligible player. This worked very well for Augusta National—which was so steeped in the plantation tradition that it permitted only black caddies until 1982—until 1967 when Charlie Sifford won the Hartford Open. In order to exclude Sifford the Masters changed its standing practice of inviting the previous year's PGA winners and used other criteria, a remedy they repeated in 1968 when Pete Brown won the San Diego Open and again in 1969 when Charlie Sifford won the Los Angeles Open.

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After these episodes the PGA Tour demanded that the Masters establish and maintain a constant set of criteria for entry into the tournament, whereupon Augusta National decided to stick to the criterion of inviting all of the previous year's PGA winners. The next victory by a black on the tour was by Elder in 1974, which automatically qualified him to play in the 1975 Masters. It should be noted that in the seven years that Elder was a top player but did not have the criterion victory, there were times that he, or Sifford or Brown, could have been invited to participate in the Masters by a previous winner (e.g., by Arnold Palmer, Jack Nicklaus, etc.). But they were never invited!

Elder joined the Senior Tour in 1984 and has been quite successful. He won more tournaments (seven) and more money on the Senior Tour in seven years than he won on the regular tour in sixteen years.[14]

Blacks on the PGA Tour had increased success in the 1980s, but by that time there were only two top African-American players, Calvin Peete and Jim Thorpe, as most of the older black golfers had gone to the Senior PGA Tour or faded from the scene, and few young black golfers were replacing them.

During the 1980s Calvin Peete became the most accomplished black golfer in history. After early struggles—it took three tries for him to earn his PGA card and four years after that to win his first tour victory—he became one of the best players in the world, winning 12 tournaments, including the prestigious Tournament Players Championship. Today, Peete is regarded as one of the straightest hitters in the history of golf; and during one three-year stretch during the 1980s he had more victories than any other player on the tour. Plagued by various

physical ailments in the late 1980s, however, Peete's success began to fade. Over $2 million of his total earnings of $2,297,385 were earned by 1987.[15]

Peete's background is different from that of most other black golfers. He was never a caddy, and he never played in the UGA. He was one of 19 children, born in Detroit and reared in Florida. As a young man he was an itinerant salesman, selling jewelry and other wares to migrant farm workers. He had never been on a golf course until he was in his twenties—a very late start for a top professional.

Had Gregory pursued a professional career in golf when the Ladies Professional Golfers Association was formed in 1950, she would have experienced the same struggle as the black male golfers since the LGPA also initially barred blacks.

Jim Thorpe, known for playing well on tough courses, hit his stride in the 1980s. He won three tournaments in the 1980s, and through 1990 had won $1,530,466. A wrist injury and operation in 1987 limited his success from 1987 to 1989. He came back in 1990 to win $211,297 in prize money.[16]

Black Women in Golf

The early black women golfing stars were amateurs—Ella Abel and Lucy Williams in the 1930s and 1940s and Thelma Cowan and Anne Gregory in the 1940s and 1950s. Abel won the UGA National Championship in 1934 and 1935; and Williams won in 1932, 1936, 1937, and 1946.[17] Thelma Cowan won in 1947, 1949, 1954, and 1955. However, many observers place Anne Gregory of Gary, Indiana, as the best black woman golfer ever. She won the UGA national title in 1950, 1953, 1957, 1965, and 1966 (at age 49). In 1950, at 33 years of age she won six of the seven events she entered. Gregory did not aim for a professional career; she indicated that she preferred to stay with her husband and daughter and play golf for pleasure.[18]

Had Gregory pursued a professional career in golf when the Ladies Professional Golfers Association (LPGA) was formed in 1950, she would have experienced the same struggle as the black male golfers since the LGPA also initially barred blacks. To date only two black women have been members of the LPGA Tour. In 1967 Renee Powell became the first black woman on the LPGA Tour. She received the expected indignities—racial slurs and hate mail. She was joined on the LPGA Tour for a time by Althea Gibson, the great tennis star, who switched from tennis to golf when her tennis skills faded. Gibson enjoyed modest success on the tour, posting the only victory ever for a black woman.

What Happened to Black Professional Golf?

Today, some 30 years after blacks first played on the PGA Tour, their impact is less evident than ever before. When Sifford first entered the tour he began making significant showings. Although several years passed before he achieved his first victory, he was competitive, earning a fair amount of prize money. After Sifford, over a dozen black players entered the tour. Now in 1991 there are just two—and they are not playing that often or very well. What happened to the black players?

Two phenomena, more than anything else, are responsible for the decreased numbers of black golfers on the regular PGA Tour—the aging of earlier black professional golfers and the popularity of the golf cart. Most of the black players became involved in golf through caddying. However, in the past 25 years or so the golf cart has replaced caddies at most courses across the country. Consequently, the chances of learning golf through caddying has been almost eliminated.

If blacks are to reestablish a presence in the professional golfing world, more individuals must compete at the collegiate level.

That most of the top professional golfers were initially caddies is not unique to blacks. White golfers came up through the sport the same way, but a generation earlier. Until the Arnold Palmer era of the late fifties and early sixties, most white professional golfers had been caddies; since Palmer, however, most of the white golfing stars have come through the college ranks. For example, Ben Hogan, Sam Sneed, and Byron Nelson, who were stars in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, did not come through the college ranks. Palmer, Billy Casper, and Jack Nicklaus did—and virtually everyone since. The transition from caddying to college among white golfers took place by the end of the 1950s, before the great transition from caddies to golf carts occurred. On the other hand, the black golfing stars of the 1960s and 1970s were from the caddy ranks.

Only a handful of blacks have ever played golf on teams at colleges that are not predominantly black. And HBCUs do not get invited to compete in the NCAA's Collegiate Golf Championships. Consequently, those blacks who do play in college do not play at the highest levels of collegiate competition. In an effort to provide more competition for black golfers at HBCUs a National Minority College Golf Championship began some five years ago. This effort, of course, is not a panacea. If blacks are to reestablish a presence in the professional golfing world, more individuals must compete at the collegiate level.

I should report here that, as often is the case, isolated instances of extremely talented individuals do arise in spite of the general trend that I have outlined. Fellow amateurs and touring professionals alike are currently raving over a young black golfer, Tiger Wood of Cypress, California, who almost qualified to play in the Los Angeles Open PGA event last winter.[19] Wood, who turned 15 in December, continued his precocious play by becoming the third ranked junior amateur for 1990. (All other players in the top ten are 17 to 19 years of age.) Woods won his age group in the Optimist Junior World a record five times. And while still 14, he competed against junior players and won the Insurance National Youth Golf Classic, placed second in the PGA Junior, and reached the semifinals in the U.S. Junior.[20]

Among black women, LaRee Sugg would appear to be the leading candidate for stardom on the LPGA Tour. Sugg was a young phenomenon, winning a number of national tournaments during her preteen and early teen years. She was elected to *Golf* magazine's all-American list when she was 12 and when she was 13 years of age.[21] Currently, she is a member of the UCLA women's golf team, which is ranked third in the country. Sugg is ranked nineteenth among college women players.[22]

In the 1950s the production of white male golfing professionals shifted locales, from the ranks of the caddies to junior tournaments and college competition. Black golf has not yet made this shift. The result is a greying black professional golfing pool and a greatly diminished number of top young black players. This phenomenon is occurring in spite of the fact that the number of black golfers is steadily increasing. Since the caddy route is no longer viable, if there is to be any resurgence of interest in the game, more young blacks must enter the sport and participate in junior tournaments and play on college teams.

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